



Town of Hopkinton

Office of Select Board

330 Main Street, Hopkinton NH 03229-2627 - (603) 746-3170 – www.hopkinton-nh.gov

**SELECT BOARD
PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES
Monday, November 8, 2021
Draft**

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Sabrina Dunlap called this Budget Work Session meeting of the Select Board to order at 5:30 p.m. on Monday, November 8, 2021. With the meeting being held at Town Hall, Chair Dunlap introduced the members of the Board.

Select Board

Members Present: Sabrina Dunlap, Ken Traum, Anna Wells, and Steven Whitley in person; Jeffrey Donohoe via conference telephone.

Staff Present: Neal Cass, Town Administrator; Cara Johnson, Administrative/Assessing Assistant; Karen Roberston, Planning/Zoning Director; Deb Gallant, Finance Director; Alicia Presti, Human Services Director; Paula Simpkins, Recreation Director; Donna Dunlop, Library Director.

Others Present: Lynn Clark, Gayle Kimball, and Judy Hampe, Cemetery Trustees.

Before proceeding, a motion was made by Chair Dunlap, and seconded by Mr. Traum, to allow Mr. Donohoe to join the meeting remotely.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

Sabrina Dunlap Yes
Ken Traum Yes
Anna Wells Yes
Steven Whitley Yes

MOTION PASSED 4-0.

ADMINISTRATIVE:

The Board reviewed documents for signature, and approved (5-0) the Consent Agenda, taking the following action on a motion made by Mr. Traum and seconded by Mr. Whitley.

Town of Hopkinton - Select Board

Consent Agenda

November 8, 2021

| <u>Item</u> | <u>Date</u> | <u>Action</u> | <u>Comment</u> |
|---|-------------|---------------|----------------|
| AP MANIFEST | | | |
| AP Manifest dated 11/8/2021 ch #s 67106-67155 | 11/8/2021 | Approve | \$276,213.17 |
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|--|-----------|---------|--------------|
| FUND TRANSFERS | | | |
| From Sewer Fund Account to General Op. Fund | 11/8/2021 | Approve | \$13,076.40 |
| PAYROLL | | | |
| Employee Payroll | 11/8/2021 | Approve | \$140,051.99 |
| LAND USE CHANGE TAX | | | |
| 210-004-002 157 Kast Hill Road | 11/8/2021 | Approve | \$691.60 |
| 258-071-000 Hopkinton Road | 11/8/2021 | Approve | \$8,180.00 |
| PROPERTY TAX ABATEMENT | | | |
| 225-127-000 Little Tooky Road | 11/8/2021 | Approve | \$80.00 |
| 999-004-000 Townwide - | 11/8/2021 | Approve | \$59,001.83 |
| 256-019-000 434 Brockway Road | 11/8/2021 | Approve | \$5,121.00 |
| 102-050-000 53 Maple Street | 11/8/2021 | Approve | \$5,825.00 |
| 208-003-A24 A24 Chipmunk Way | 11/8/2021 | Approve | \$160.00 |
| 221-139-000 Pine Street | 11/8/2021 | Approve | \$115.00 |
| 223-010-000 641 Park Avenue | 11/8/2021 | Approve | \$1,273.00 |
| 208-003-A13 A13 Beach Way | 11/8/2021 | Approve | \$305.00 |
| 210-025-001 1994 Maple Street | 11/8/2021 | Approve | \$2,359.00 |
| 208-003-0A9 A9 Sandy Beach Way | 11/8/2021 | Approve | \$254.00 |
| 203-006-000 Camp Merrimac Road | 11/8/2021 | Approve | \$166.00 |
| 208-003-C23 C23 Colonial Circle | 11/8/2021 | Approve | \$23.00 |
| 206-015-000 1846 Clement Hill Road | 11/8/2021 | Approve | \$2,240.00 |
| 206-010-000 Clement Hill Road | 11/8/2021 | Approve | \$3.00 |
| 208-044-000 130 Rolfe Pond Drive | 11/8/2021 | Approve | \$5,424.00 |
| 265-028-088 845 Upper Straw Road (per Sancoucy, billed twice) | 11/8/2021 | Approve | \$12,619.48 |
| 236-057-088 394 Sugar Hill Road (assessment change) | 11/8/2021 | Approve | \$94.00 |
| 208-003-H11 H11 Hummingbird Way (camper moved) | 11/8/2021 | Approve | \$250.00 |
| 208-003-H11 H11 Hummingbird Way (camper moved-refund taxes) | 11/8/2021 | Approve | \$226.00 |
| 258-074-000 Jewett Road (property merged from 258-075-000) | 11/8/2021 | Approve | \$2.00 |
| YIELD TAX LEVY | | | |
| 221-024-000 361 Pine Steet | 11/8/2021 | Approve | \$0.00 |
| 211-014-000 (Tamarack Road) & 211-019-000 (91 Country Club Road) | 11/8/2021 | Approve | \$438.55 |
| 221-033-000 Pine Street | 11/8/2021 | Approve | \$255.72 |
| OTHER | | | |
| Employee Status Notification Form Stephen Pecora | 11/8/2021 | Approve | |
| Employee Status Notification Form Thomas Hennessey | 11/8/2021 | Approve | |
| Personnel Action Form David Blanchard (New hire/new pay rate) | 11/8/2021 | Approve | |

ROLL CALL VOTE:

| | |
|-----------------|-----|
| Sabrina Dunlap | Yes |
| Ken Traum | Yes |
| Anna Wells | Yes |
| Jeffrey Donohoe | Yes |
| Steven Whitley | Yes |

MOTION PASSED 5-0.

The Board reviewed the Public Meeting Minutes of Monday, October 25, 2021. Mr. Traum made a motion, seconded by Chair Dunlap, to approve the Public Meeting Minutes of October 25, 2021.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

| | |
|-----------------|-----|
| Sabrina Dunlap | Yes |
| Ken Traum | Yes |
| Anna Wells | Yes |
| Jeffrey Donohoe | Yes |
| Steven Whitley | Yes |

MOTION PASSED 5-0.

The Board reviewed the Non-Public Meeting Minutes of Monday, October 25, 2021, Session I. Mr. Traum made a motion, seconded by Chair Dunlap, to approve the Non-Public Meeting Minutes of October 25, Session I. Mr. Traum noted the minutes were not sealed.

VOTE: Dunlap, Traum, Wells, Donohoe, and Whitley voting in favor of the motion, no votes against; **MOTION PASSED 5-0.**

The Board reviewed the Non-Public Meeting Minutes of Monday, October 25, 2021, Session II. Mr. Traum made a motion, seconded by Mr. Whitley, to approve the Non-Public Meeting Minutes of October 25, Session II. Mr. Traum noted the minutes were sealed.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

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|-----------------|---------|
| Sabrina Dunlap | Yes |
| Ken Traum | Yes |
| Anna Wells | Abstain |
| Jeffrey Donohoe | Yes |
| Steven Whitley | Yes |

MOTION PASSED 4-0-1.

The Board reviewed the Public Meeting Minutes of Tuesday, October 26, 2021. Mr. Traum noted that this was a joint meeting with the School Board and that there were some minor errors in the minutes and Chair Dunlap indicated they would be corrected. Mr. Traum made a motion, seconded by Chair Dunlap, to approve the Public Meeting Minutes of October 26.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

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|----------------|-----|
| Sabrina Dunlap | Yes |
|----------------|-----|

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|-----------------|-----|
| Ken Traum | Yes |
| Anna Wells | Yes |
| Jeffrey Donohoe | Yes |
| Steven Whitley | Yes |

MOTION PASSED 5-0.

BUDGET PRESENTATIONS:

Karen Robertson, Planning and Zoning: Focusing on the changes for the Code Enforcement Officer, Bob Pike, Ms. Robertson noted that the building boom has resulted in an increase to 16 hours per week. Additionally, the ZBA has had twice as many applications submitted in 2021 than in 2020. Mr. Traum asked if the Code Enforcement Officer will have to put in as many hours in 2022 and Ms. Robertson said she anticipates he will have the same number of hours. She pointed out that the fees have always covered the position. Mr. Traum asked if increasing fees may be an option and Ms. Robertson pointed out that she had done some research and the towns from which she was able to gain information had higher fees, in general. Mr. Traum suggested this topic be revisited in the near future. Mr. Whitley asked about professional services and a brief dialog ensued, regarding specifics of these services, and Ms. Robertson ultimately suggested that scanning projects would be the only item she could see eliminating. With no further questions at the time, Ms. Robertson and the Board exchanged thanks.

Deb Gallant, Finance: Regarding the Finance budget, Ms. Gallant highlighted the Operating Expense section, noting that the phone has stayed about the same, but there has been a software upgrade, and the new system is more efficient and less cumbersome. Ms. Gallant pointed out that the Warrant Article covered the software, so the budget proposed for 2022 will be for maintenance. Mr. Cass added that the new software could be hosted locally or in the cloud and the Town has opted for the cloud-based hosting which provides better security and continuation of service. Ms. Gallant noted the changes in the budget proposal for the auditor and fixed assets and pointed out that while there was a higher allocation for bank fees this year, it has not been needed. Mr. Traum and Ms. Gallant reflected on the previous budget, and it was agreed that the elimination of GASB 75 was not a problem for the auditors, so it would not be included in the proposed 2022 budget. Ms. Gallant and the Board exchanged thanks.

Alicia Presti, Human Services: After introducing the proposed budget increase for 2022, Ms. Presti explained that this is primarily due to the increase in housing expenditures. Of special note by Ms. Presti was that several thousand dollars in rental assistance had come from the nearly depleted Human Services Donation Account, so that amount was not included in the expenditures through October 31 of this year. It was pointed out that the guidelines for rental assistance date back to 2013, making them unrealistic by current standards. Mr. Traum pointed out that the State has received generous federal funding this year and asked if any has been received for Welfare purposes. While Ms. Presti was able to assist someone with applying for COVID relief housing assistance, no money has come directly to Human Services. She pointed out that assistance either goes to the applicant or to the applicant's landlord. Turning to the Administrative side of Social Services, Mr. Cass, Chair Dunlap, and Ms. Presti discussed the Trust Fund and donations and Ms. Pesti explained that donations are often made to specific areas, such as fuel assistance, the Christmas Fund, or the Food Bank, which is a separate non-profit organization. Regarding the increase in the proposed telephone budget, Ms. Presti pointed out that a smartphone is a necessity for effective navigation of calls, text messaging, and accessing email while away from the office. Ms. Presti and the Board exchanged thanks.

Paula Simpkins, Recreation: Ms. Simpkins began by pointing out that although there are not many other changes to her proposed budget, the Kimball Pond staff wages are a point of discussion. She noted the difficulty in attracting applicants, particularly when multiple companies and organizations are offering significantly higher pay rates and added that the lifeguards must also complete three days of intensive training. Discussion ensued, centered on whether other towns are having similar hiring challenges, the possibility of a lifeguard sharing program, offering an incentive program at the high school, changing hours, and the option of letting people swim at their own risk. Further discussion focused on whether parking passes and admission might be explored, but Ms. Simpkins pointed out that more staff would be needed for such options. The proposed increase in staff wages, Ms. Simpkins noted, was really the necessity, stressing that the lifeguards are important and should be paid for the trained people they are. Moving to other topics, Ms. Simpkins pointed at that the cost of port-a-potty rentals has increased, memberships and dues are up, and the Sam's Club membership is used for all the shopping for senior lunches. Mr. Donohoe asked about the milfoil and Ms. Simpkins indicated the State DES would be looking at a management plan, and that she had just received an email regarding grants for a management plan; at this time, there is no budgeted money for a management plan. Ms. Simpkins and the Board exchanged thanks.

Donna Dunlop, Library: Ms. Dunlop greeted the Select Board and expressed her appreciation for the recent visit they and Mr. Cass made to the library. She continued by noting that circulation is up, there is an increase in patrons in-person and utilizing the curbside service and use of the community and quiet study rooms has been high. Turning to the budget, Ms. Dunlop pointed out the increases in fuel and electricity costs and said that PSNH will be brought in to perform an audit. She also noted the 4,500 gallon decrease in annual fuel usage now, as compared to when she started at the Hopkinton Town Library twelve years ago, part of their plan to be good stewards. She also pointed out that all LED lighting was installed after the lightning strike and that the HVAC company that services the library suggested setting up a maintenance plan. Ms. Dunlop, Mr. Whitley, Mr. Traum, and Ms. Wells discussed the details of the maintenance plan, the timing of the PSNH audit, and if solar power has been considered as an option, noting that a pavilion rooftop might be an ideal location for solar panels. Ms. Wells noted how quickly the money invested in a solar system could be recouped. Ms. Dunlop agreed and added that the Library Trustees would like to look at options. Mr. Whitley added that individual articles of Capital Reserve funds might be utilized for the library's maintenance plan, as well as for equipment. Ms. Dunlop said she would explore the possibilities. With no further questions, Ms. Dunlop and the Board exchanged thanks.

Lynn Clark, Gayle Kimball, and Judy Hampe, Cemetery Trustees: Ms. Clark began by commending Cemetery Sexton, Joe Tristaino, and Gardener, Sienna Larson, for their work, and a brief discussion ensued regarding the success of and appreciation for this year's Cemetery Walk. Turning to the budget, Ms. Clark noted that they are saving a bit here and there, but will be using the Trust Fund for gardening and landscaping. Appreciation was expressed for Mr. Tristaino's compensation and Ms. Kimball noted that the Trustees look forward to taking part in formal review process for Mr. Tristaino. Mr. Donohoe asked about a discrepancy in the budget figures and a brief discussion took place regarding whether it was a typo. Regarding the topic of private cemeteries in town, Ms. Kimball noted that there has been an inquiry about the upkeep of the Putnam Cemetery. She pointed out that there would need to be headstone upkeep and the shed at the Contoocook Cemetery will be replaced. Ms. Kimball announced that Ms. Larson had identified twenty trees in the Old Hopkinton Cemetery and would be putting in signs for the trees, to encourage the public to visit the cemeteries. Ms. Kimball and Mr. Whitley briefly discussed the change in the groundskeeping, maintenance and mileage line being due to the varying locations of Mr. Tristaino's work and the need for replacement parts and

maintenance requirements. Mr. Traum inquired about the cost of plots and Ms. Clark pointed out that there has not been a need for change, as cremation has been the choice of more people, so there has not been a need to buy more land. The Cemetery Trustees and the Board exchanged thanks.

Neal Cass, Executive/IT/Assessing/Legal/Community Services/Patriotic Purposes/EDC: With regard to the Executive budget, Mr. Cass noted that NH Retirement is up, as are advertising, postage, and Select Board expenses. Although there is an increase in the IT budget, due to primarily cloud-based software, antivirus programs, and email, Mr. Cass noted that, since switching companies, it has not gone up since 2015. Mr. Cass also noted that the only change in Assessing is due to the increase in cost of record storage, but he is looking into ways of reducing this cost. Regarding the budgeted amount for Legal, discussion about ways to reduce this figure by paying for the FairPoint settlement in a different way, ensued, and Mr. Cass said he would have to look into it. As Community Services and Patriotic Purposes have been the same for years, there was little discussion, but Mr. Cass noted that the same figure includes community concerts and parades. Regarding the EDC, Mr. Traum asked if we belong to the Kearsarge Chamber of Commerce or just the Contoocook Chamber, and Mr. Cass replied that the application fee for the Kearsarge Chamber is included in the budget. Mr. Whitley elaborated on the opportunities available for members of both Chambers. Mr. Cass, Mr. Whitley, and Mr. Traum noted the details of the road bond and the resulting increase in debt.

Further discussion of previous topics ensued among Mr. Cass, Mr. Traum, and Ms. Wells. Mr. Cass noted he has asked Ms. Gallant to set up meetings with three providers to discuss options for health insurance. It was also noted that fuel oil and electricity are the largest changes, and sewer fees increased, as well. Mr. Traum inquired about the water to the Horseshoe Tavern, and Mr. Cass said this is only until Christmas. There was a brief discussion of next week's agenda.

OTHER:

Mr. Cass noted that there will be a service for Veterans' Day at the park across from the Hopkinton Village Store.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Cara Johnson
Administrative/Assessing Assistant